

high practical efficiency. It involves hesitation and the possibility of error. But it possesses the transcendent advantage of affording opportunities for the exercise of choice, that is to say, for the play of the will. It is, however, fortunate for our health that the action of the heart, the stomach, and other internal organs is governed by a separate nerve system that is directed by instinct in independence of the brain, and is not liable to these disturbing complications. With however great an effort we cannot help winking when the eye is suddenly threatened. Nervous impulses such as these (styled "reflex") are practically mechanical: the ganglia which actuate them lie mostly in the spinal column, and operate without reference to the brain. We can, by practice, acquire artificial "reflex" (or, as they are termed, "ideo-motor") capacities: the complicated movements required in talking, eating, or playing the piano can be effected subconsciously at times when the brain is occupied with other matters. Skill was acquired by conscious effort in which the brain took place, but, with the attainment of dexterity, the nervous process has become so to speak, short-circuited, and is not interfered with by impressions or thoughts which would distract a beginner. Ordinarily, however, so far as our conscious lives are concerned, our impulses are liable to inhibition: we may be distracted by

a desire
for drink. but we may resist the
impulse if in
habit. shame, sympathy for others, or
solicitude
for our own health, we can find over-
balancing
considerations. An outcry of " fire "—
an im-
pression caused by a symbol—will
drive the
audience in a theatre into a panic.
But a speech
by the manager may possibly control
them.